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ABSTRACT

This report presents estimates of the population for 1980 to 1986 for Puerto Rico, the American Virgin Islands, American Samoa, Guam, and the Northern Mariana Islands. Census counts for 1980 are also shown for each of the areas. Except for Puerto Rico, all of the areas are growing at a rate well above that of the United States (6.4 percent). Of all the areas, Guam has exhibited the most growth since 1980--19.6 percent. Although both Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands have increased in population since 1980, both experienced population declines between 1985 and 1986: the Virgin Islands declined by 1.2 percent, Puerto Rico by 0.3 percent. The components of population decline are natural change (births minus deaths) and net migration (immigrants minus emigrants). Limitations of the estimates are discussed. Maps of the areas discussed are provided. Three tables illustrate the data. (BJV)

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Population Estimates and Projections

Series P-25, No. 1009
Issued July 1987

Estimates of the Population of Puerto Rico and the Outlying Areas: 1980 to 1986

(This report supersedes Current Population Reports, Series P-25, No. 997. Estimates for Puerto Rico and the outlying areas for the 1970's, 1960's, and 1950's appear in Current Population Reports, Series P-25, Nos. 943, 603, and 336, respectively.)

This report presents estimates of the population for July 1, 1980, to 1986 for the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Virgin Islands of the United States, American Samoa, Guam, and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Census counts for 1980 are also shown for each of the areas. Small areas under American jurisdiction in the Pacific Ocean such as Midway, Wake, and Canton Islands, and Johnston Atoll are excluded; there were 1,082 persons on these islands at the time of the 1980 census.

The report also presents the components of population change for these areas for the 1980-86 period. The components of population change are natural change (births minus deaths) and net migration (the number of persons migrating into a particular area minus the number migrating from the area). In some of the areas shown, net migration is not estimated directly but is derived as a residual, that is, the difference between the total amount of change and natural change.

Except for Puerto Rico, all of the areas estimated are growing at a rate well above that of the United States (6.4 percent from April 1, 1980, to July 1, 1986). Of the areas, Guam has exhibited the highest percent growth since 1980—19.6 percent. Although Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands have increased in population since 1980, both experienced population declines between 1985 and 1986. The Virgin Islands population declined by 1.2 percent (from 110,800 to 109,500), while Puerto Rico decreased by 0.3 percent (from 3,282,000 to 3,274,000).

METHODOLOGY

Because the availability of data relating to population change varies from area to area and the concentration of special population groups in some of the areas (e.g., the large concentration of Federally affiliated people on Guam) makes it difficult to rely on standard methods, different procedures are used for each area.

Puerto Rico. The estimates for Puerto Rico were based on the 1980 census and on reported statistics for each of the

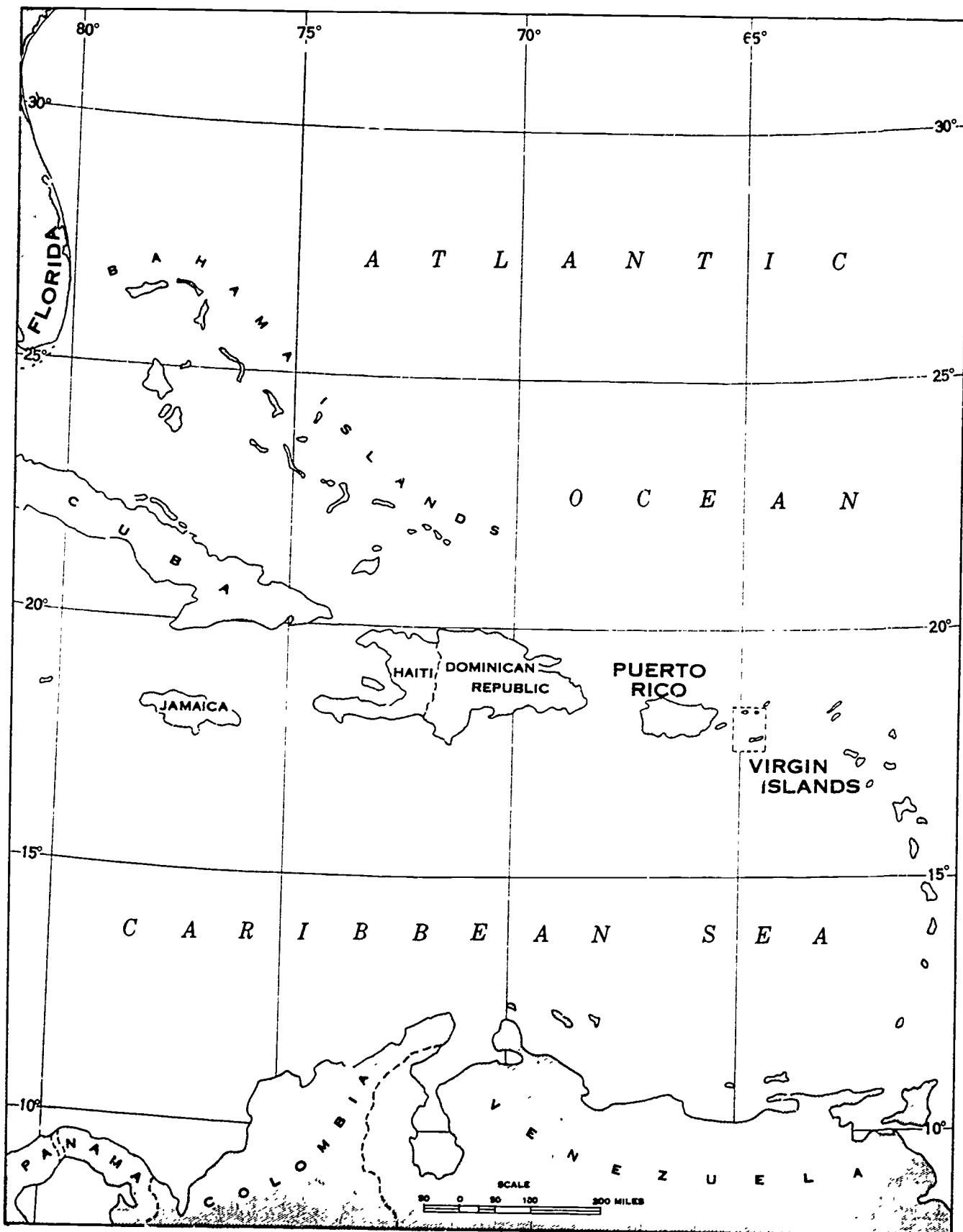
components of population change. The migration component was derived from monthly passenger statistics on arrivals to and departures from Puerto Rico compiled by the Commonwealth government. The migration estimate for Puerto Rico is the sum of centered 12-month moving averages of the reported monthly data. This compensates for bias introduced by short-term fluctuations in passenger data which reflect the seasonal movement of transients (tourists and other visitors) rather than the movement of migrants to a new residence. The movement of transients tends to cancel out over longer periods.

Virgin Islands. The estimates for the Virgin Islands and its component islands were developed using Component Method II. Components of change were added to the 1980 census base population to obtain a current estimate. In this method, net migration was estimated on the basis of school enrollment data, using the difference between the estimated population of elementary school age and the population of school age expected on the basis of the most recent census and births since the census. A more detailed discussion of the method can be found in Current Population Reports, Series P-25, No. 640.

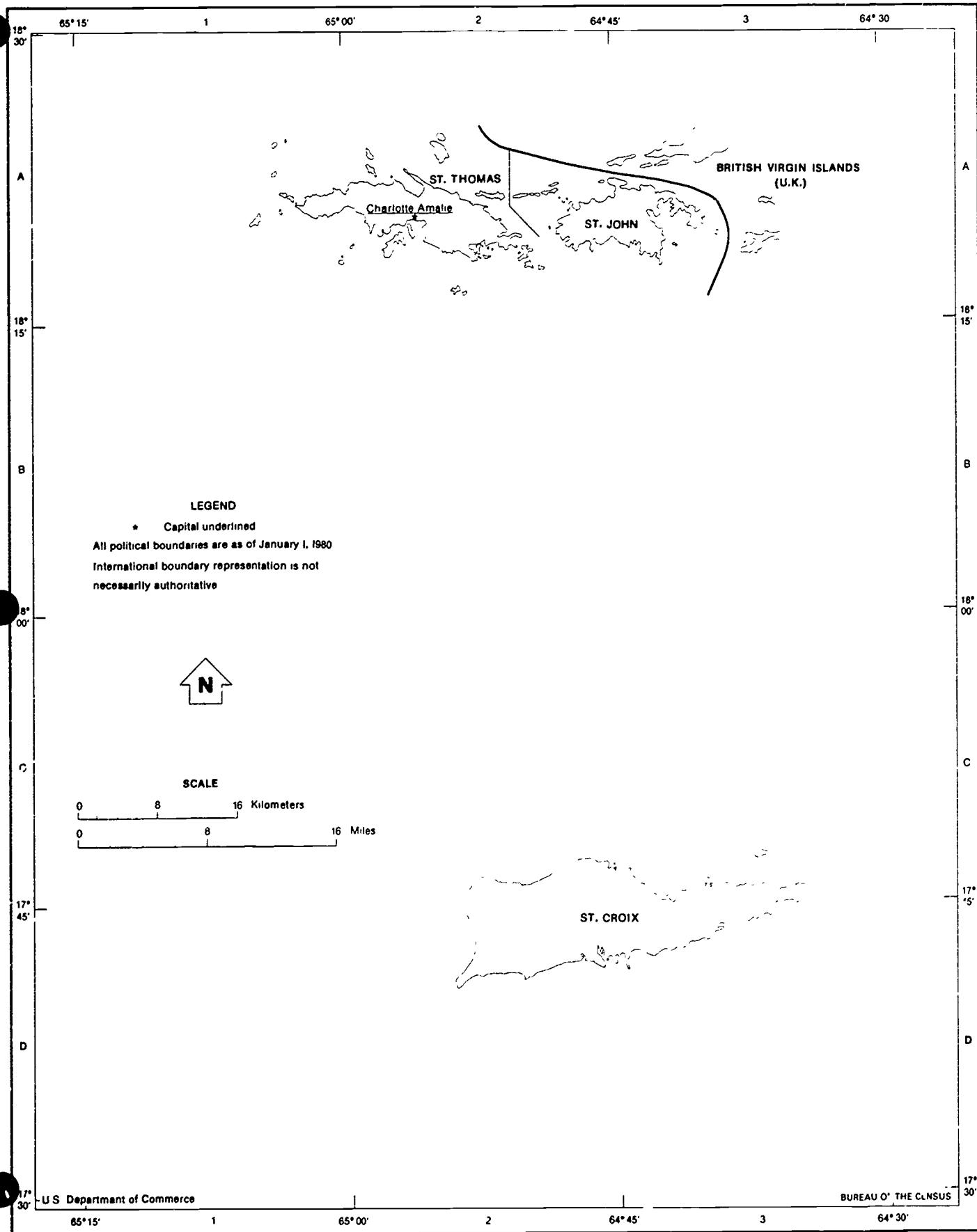
St. Thomas and St. John were estimated as a unit because the school data do not permit separate reliable estimates of migration for them (1980 populations: 44,372 and 2,472, respectively). The island estimates were prepared in the same way as those for the Virgin Islands as a whole, except that they were controlled to an independent U.S. Virgin Islands total as a last step.

American Samoa. The estimates for American Samoa were based on the 1980 census and births and deaths reported by the Government of American Samoa. Since there is no reporting system for migration, net migration must be estimated indirectly. For April 1, 1980, through July 1, 1986, the average annual amount of net migration was estimated based on the level of residual net migration for the 1977-80 period. The

CARIBBEAN AREA



THE VIRGIN ISLANDS OF THE UNITED STATES-Islands



1977-80 period was chosen because the Government of American Samoa conducted a survey in 1977 which could be used in conjunction with the 1980 census and reported births and deaths to estimate net migration.

Guam. The estimates of the population of Guam were developed by adding the components of change to the relevant population base. The July 1, 1980, through 1986 estimates were derived using a base composed of the 1980 census count less the estimated population on April 1, 1980, who were born in the United States.¹ The population base is restricted because of the large and relatively transient Federally affiliated population for which migration is substantial and difficult to estimate. Rather than estimate migration for this population group, administrative records were used to determine the number of Federally affiliated persons on each estimate date. The following were added to the relevant population base:

1. **Natural increase.** The excess of births over deaths to the population is based on reported birth and death statistics. Excluded are "e" births and deaths occurring in the U.S. Naval Hospital which are accounted for in step 4.
2. **Change in alien contract workers.** This category is primarily composed of contract workers brought in from the Philippines by the Department of Defense. The estimates are based on information provided by the Guam Department of Commerce.
3. **Net alien immigration.** These are persons accepted for permanent residence in the United States. The estimate is based on Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) figures on immigrants who reported on their visa application that they intended to live on Guam. It is assumed that 40 percent of the immigrants each year either leave Guam or inaccurately reported their intention of living on Guam. This assumption is based on an analysis of expected versus actual change in the alien population between 1970 and 1980. Expected change was derived from INS records on immigrants and naturalizations plus the change in alien contract workers (see item 2 above). Actual change was based on the net change in the annual alien registration data collected by INS until 1982.
4. **Federally affiliated population.** The number of Armed Forces stationed on Guam was obtained from the U.S. Department of Defense. The Guam Department of Commerce provided data on the numbers of Federal civilian employees and dependents of both Federal civilian employees and the military.
5. **Guamanian inductions less discharges.** The number of persons in the Armed Forces in the United States who lived on Guam before joining the military is available from the Department of Defense. One half the change in pre-service residence on Guam was used to approximate inductions less discharges on Guam.

No data are available on the movement of the nonfederally affiliated population who are not covered above, but this component of net migration is probably not large.

Northern Mariana Islands. Net migration for April 1, 1980, to July 1, 1986, was estimated based on revised migration estimates for the period 1973 to 1980. The estimates for July 1, 1980, through 1986 were then derived by adding the components of population change to the 1980 census count. Since net migration is computed as a residual and vital statistics are likely to be underreported, the residual probably includes underreported births and deaths to a much greater extent than in American Samoa. For this reason, net migration is not shown for the Northern Marianas in table 1.

LIMITATIONS OF THE ESTIMATES

The areas for which estimates are presented in this report are unique in terms of size, location, and composition. This creates difficulty in developing appropriate estimating procedures, much less standard procedures that are applicable for all the areas. The poor quality and absence of adequate data make it difficult to prepare accurate estimates. The estimation techniques used in this report were selected on the basis of a test of methods against the 1970 census or 1980 census² or on the basis of the use of additional data sources not previously available. A comparison of the 1980 census results and the estimates for 1980 is shown in table A.

For Puerto Rico, the estimating technique now used remains essentially unchanged from that used for the 1960's and 1970's. The accuracy of the estimate depends very heavily on the cancellation in the migration statistics of the large number of visitors who travel between Puerto Rico and the mainland of the United States. Since gross arrival and departure data obviously contain a large number of tourists, net monthly figures are computed and smoothed using a 12-month moving average. This process provides rough approximations of net migration for Puerto Rico. The procedure estimated Puerto Rico's population to be less than 0.1 percent different from the 1980 census results.

In the case of the Virgin Islands, where Component Method II is employed, the difference between the April 1, 1980, estimate and the census count was trivial for the Territory as a whole, only 23 persons. For the island estimates, however, the estimating error was much higher (-7.7 percent for St. Croix and +8.1 percent for St. Thomas-St. John).

The estimating procedure used for American Samoa is a means of bridging a period when no possible independent migration estimates can be developed. The 1980 census and the 1977 survey provide reference points which, in combination with reported vital statistics, can be used to yield acceptable estimates of net migration for the intervening period. The actual migration for each year in the period is unknown. In the absence of any other information concerning the annual migration

¹The April 1, 1980, American population on Guam was estimated based on data furnished by the Guam Department of Commerce and the U.S. Department of Defense.

²For more information on the 1970 test, see Current Population Reports, Series P-25, No. 731. The 1980 test results are reported in Series P-25, No. 919.

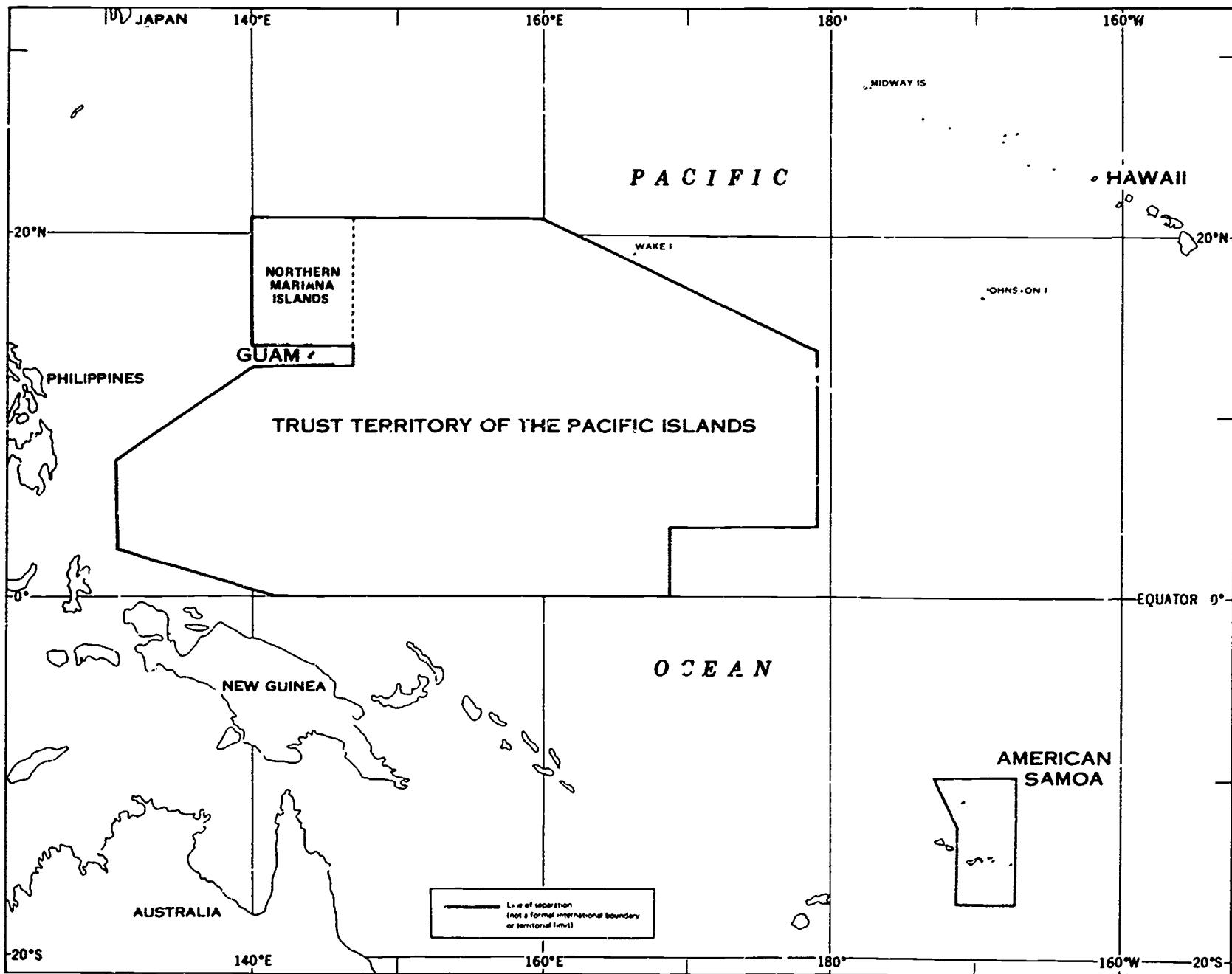


Table A. Comparison of 1980 Census and Population Estimates for Puerto Rico and Outlying Areas

Area	1980 census	1980 population estimate	Error ¹	Percent error ²
Puerto Rico	3,196,520	3,195,130	-1,390	-
Virgin Islands	96,569	96,546	-23	-
St. Croix	49,725	45,911	-3,814	-7.7
St. Thomas and				
St. John	46,844	50,635	3,791	8.1
American Samoa	32,297	32,260	-37	-0.1
Guam	105,979	116,251	10,272	9.7
Northern Mariana Islands	16,780	18,574	1,794	10.7

- Represents zero.

¹The error is the difference between the 1980 population estimate and the 1980 census count.

²Base for percent is 1980 census count.

pattern, it has been assumed that there was a smooth annual net outmigration during this period, and that this pattern has continued on through each year until the estimate date.

The Government of American Samoa conducted a 20-percent household survey in 1985 which yielded a population estimate for May 1 of 35,277. The Bureau's estimate for July 1, 1985, is 36,300. Even without adjusting for the 2-month discrepancy, the Bureau's estimate falls within the 95-percent confidence interval of the survey estimate. This suggests that the Bureau's immigration assumption for American Samoa is reasonably accurate. Also, since the survey results and the Bureau's estimates do not vary significantly, the survey results have not been incorporated into the estimation process.

For Guam, as indicated earlier, the estimates are based on a special estimating method which yields point estimates of the various subcategories of the population. The test of this method for the 1960-70 period showed an overestimate of about 10 percent. This level and direction of error still existed in the estimates in 1980. Likely explanations for this include

the lack of accurate migration data as well as conflicting information on persons who were born in the 50 States and on the special populations employed in the current methodology.

The estimates for the Northern Mariana Islands contain a similar level of error and are biased in the same direction. The 1980 error was 1,794 persons, or 10.7 percent. As was the case for Guam, the lack of any migration data combined with the lack of censuses or surveys during the intercensal period poses a serious problem in estimating the Northern Marianas population.

Efforts will continue to be made to correct the estimation errors to the degree that available methodologies and data will permit.

SOURCES OF DATA

Most of the statistics used to prepare the area estimates presented in this report were obtained from the local governments or the outlying areas. Data on births and deaths were obtained from the local governments for Puerto Rico and the outlying areas. Armed Forces data are based on figures provided by the Coast Guard and the Department of Defense. School enrollment data for the Virgin Islands were supplied by the Virgin Islands Department of Education.

For Puerto Rico, data on migration were supplied by the Puerto Rico Planning Board. The number of Federal civilian employees on Guam was obtained from the Guam Department of Commerce.

ROUNDING OF ESTIMATES

Each estimate in this report has been rounded independently to the nearest thousand (Puerto Rico) or hundred (other areas) from figures computed to the last digit. Hence, the sum of the parts may differ from the total shown. Percentages are based on unrounded numbers.

Table 1. Estimates of the Components of Change in the Resident Population of Puerto Rico and Outlying Areas of the United States: 1980 to 1986

(Resident population includes persons in the Armed Forces stationed in each area. Each estimate has been rounded to the nearest thousand for Puerto Rico and to the nearest hundred for the outlying areas)

Period and area	Population at end of period	Change		Components of change		
		Number	Percent	Births	Deaths	Net migration
APRIL 1, 1980, TO JULY 1, 1986						
Caribbean areas:						
Puerto Rico.....	3,274,000	77,000	2.4	418,000	136,000	-204,000
Virgin Islands.....	109,500	12,900	13.4	15,400	3,300	900
St. Croix.....	54,300	4,600	9.2	8,100	1,600	-2,000
St. Thomas and St. John.....	55,200	8,400	17.9	7,300	1,800	2,900
Pacific areas:						
American Samoa.....	37,300	5,000	15.5	8,000	900	-2,100
Guam.....	126,800	20,800	19.6	19,100	12,700	24,400
Northern Mariana Islands.....	19,700	2,900	17.2	4,000	600	**

** Because part of the residual migration in this area reflects underregistration of vital statistics, migration figures are not shown.

¹ Total births and deaths.

² Includes movement of members of the Armed Forces and their dependents.

Table 2. Estimates of the Resident and Civilian Populations of Puerto Rico and Outlying Areas: 1980 to 1986

(Each estimate has been rounded to the nearest thousand for Puerto Rico and to the nearest hundred for the outlying areas)

Date (July 1, except as noted)	Virgin Islands						Northern Mariana Islands
	Puerto Rico	Total	St. Croix	St. John	American Samoa	Guam	
RESIDENT POPULATION							
1986.....	3,274,000	109,500	54,300	55,200	37,300	126,800	19,700
1985.....	3,282,000	110,800	55,300	55,500	36,300	123,900	19,100
1984.....	3,269,000	107,500	55,000	52,500	35,300	119,900	18,600
1983.....	3,265,000	103,700	53,800	49,900	34,500	116,000	18,200
1982.....	3,262,000	101,500	52,300	49,200	33,800	110,500	17,800
1981.....	3,245,000	98,300	50,800	47,500	33,100	109,900	17,300
1980.....	3,206,000	97,700	50,300	47,400	32,400	106,900	16,900
1980 (April 1).....	3,197,000	96,600	49,700	46,800	32,300	106,000	16,800
CIVILIAN POPULATION							
1986.....	3,270,000	109,500	54,300	55,100	37,300	117,500	19,700
1985.....	3,277,000	110,800	55,300	55,500	36,300	114,300	19,100
1984.....	3,265,000	107,300	54,800	52,500	35,300	112,200	18,600
1983.....	3,261,000	103,700	53,800	49,900	34,500	108,000	18,200
1982.....	3,259,000	101,500	52,300	49,200	33,800	102,500	17,800
1981.....	3,242,000	98,200	50,700	47,500	33,100	101,400	17,300
1980.....	3,202,000	97,700	50,300	47,400	32,400	97,400	16,900
1980 (April 1).....	3,192,000	96,600	49,700	46,800	32,300	96,700	16,800

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ABSTRACT

This document presents the testimony of Arnold P. Jones, Senior Associate Director of the United States General Accounting Office, before the Senate Subcommittee on Immigration and Refugee Affairs, on the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986. The Act established a legalization program that permits undocumented aliens to become permanent residents. Aliens have until May 4, 1988 to apply for residence; Congress is considering extending the deadline. However, extending the deadline may not encourage these aliens to apply for residency because of the following reasons: (1) no reliable data exist to forecast the number of aliens who will apply; (2) The 1.3 to 1.5 million expected applicants are fewer than the initial forecast of 2 to 3.9 million made by the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS); (3) awareness of the legalization program is high among Hispanics, according to a study that addressed program awareness; (4) extending the deadline may require appropriating additional funds; (5) the operational problems that exist do not threaten the program's viability; (6) the program has similarities to other countries' legalization programs; and (7) studies by others provide reasons why some aliens have not applied. (BJV)

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Testimony

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**Immigration Reform: Implementation of
Legalization Program**

Statement of
Arnold P. Jones, Senior Associate Director
General Government Division

Before the
Subcommittee on Immigration and Refugee Affairs
Committee on the Judiciary
United States Senate



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IMPLEMENTATION OF LEGALIZATION PROGRAM

SUMMARY OF STATEMENT BY
ARNOLD P. JONES
SENIOR ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR
U.S. GENERAL ACCOUNTING OFFICE

The Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 established a legalization program that permits undocumented aliens to become permanent residents. They have until May 4, 1988, to apply. Congress is considering extending the deadline. No reliable data exists to forecast the number of eligible aliens who have not applied or will apply, if the deadline is extended. Therefore, we have no basis to challenge or support extending the deadline. In addition, studies by others provide reasons why some aliens have not applied. However, extending the deadline may not encourage these aliens to apply. In summary:

- The 1.1 million applications filed with the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) is less than its initial forecast of 2 to 3.9 million. INS is now estimating it will receive 1.3 to 1.5 million applications, which is about the same as the Congressional Budget Office's estimate.
- Awareness of the legalization program is high among Hispanics, according to a study that addressed program awareness.
- INS estimates that the application fees will cover program costs if the deadline remains May 4, 1988. However, extending the program may require appropriated funds, if fees are significantly less than program costs.
- Based on our review, the operational problems that exist do not threaten the program's viability.
- The program has similarities to other countries' legalization programs.

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Subcommittee:

We are pleased to be here today to discuss our review of the Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) implementation of the legalization program for certain undocumented aliens.

BACKGROUND

Title II of the Immigration Reform and Control Act of 1986 (IRCA) established a legalization program (amnesty) to provide legal status to aliens who have continuously resided in the United States illegally since before January 1, 1982. Aliens have until May 4, 1988, to apply to INS for legalization. If approved, aliens would be granted temporary resident status. Eighteen months later they can apply for permanent resident status and eventually they could become U.S. citizens. Legislation (H.R. 3816 and S. 2015) has been introduced to extend the deadline.

When applying for legalization, aliens have to provide documents as part of their applications. These include proof that they lived in the United States continuously since before January 1, 1982, and can support themselves. Also, they have to include the results of their medical examinations and a set of their fingerprints.

In May 1987, INS opened 107 legalization offices to receive and begin processing applications and four regional processing facilities to complete final processing of applications. In

addition, it contracted with a private data processing center to enter data from applications into its computer system (legalization adjustment processing system or LAPS).

IRCA requires that applicants pay fees that would cover the program expenses. The legislative history indicates that Congress intended that the fee charged be comparable to the fee charged aliens applying to enter the United States as immigrants. To make the fees comparable and still cover its program expenses, INS set the filing fee for temporary residence at \$185 for each adult and \$50 for each minor child, with a \$420 maximum fee for families. In addition to the filing fee, aliens pay for services such as fingerprints, photographs, and medical examinations.

To encourage undocumented aliens who might fear coming to INS directly, IRCA permits aliens to file their applications with community organizations, called Qualified Designated Entities (QDEs),¹ in lieu of applying directly to INS. These entities usually provide services in the local communities and are known to the aliens who reside there. According to INS, approximately 980 QDEs signed agreements to participate in the program. Two-thirds of the QDEs are affiliated with parent organizations, called National Coordinating Agencies (NCAs), such as the U.S.

¹Undocumented aliens may also engage lawyers to assist them in preparing their applications.

Catholic Conference and World Relief, and one-third are independent.

We recently reviewed INS' activities to implement the legalization program to determine its status. We did our work in INS' Los Angeles and New York District Offices. We also discussed the program with INS staff from its Western and Eastern Regional Offices and Processing Facilities. We met with officials at 10 legalization offices and 9 QDEs. Also, we met with representatives of the NCAs during two of their regular meetings with INS and reviewed the minutes of their meetings. We also reviewed studies on reasons why aliens are not applying for the program, literature on amnesties conducted in five other countries, and other studies on legalization.

In summary:

- The 1.1 million applications filed with INS is less than its initial forecast of 2 to 3.9 million. INS is now estimating 1.3 to 1.5 million applications, which is about the same as the Congressional Budget Office's (CBO) estimate.
- Awareness of the legalization program is high among Hispanics, according to a study that addressed program awareness.
- Studies by several organizations provide reasons why some aliens have not applied, and INS and some organizations have

taken actions to reduce the impact of these factors.

Extending the deadline may not encourage these aliens to apply.

- INS estimates that the application fees will cover program costs, if the deadline remains May 4, 1988. However, extending the program may require appropriated funds if fees are significantly less than program costs.
- Although operational problems exist, they do not threaten the program's viability.
- The program has similarities to other countries' legalization programs.

No reliable data exists to forecast the number of eligible aliens who have not applied or will apply, if the deadline is extended. Because of the above factors, we have no basis to challenge or support extending the program deadline.

PROJECTED AND ACTUAL

LEGALIZATION APPLICANTS

No reliable data exists on the number of undocumented aliens in the United States or on the number eligible for the program. Using 1980 Census data and estimates obtained from its field offices and QDEs, INS projected it would receive 2 to 3.9

million applications, of which 80 percent would be filed at QDEs. CBO estimated that 1.4 million aliens would be granted temporary resident status.

As of March 25, 1988, a total of 1.1 million applications had been filed. INS expects between 1.3 and 1.5 million applications will be filed by May 4, 1988.

To try to increase the number of applications, INS made two changes in procedures for the final month of the program.

- It will pay QDEs and NCAs a recruiter fee for each applicant directed to a legalization office. This approach pays the organizations for their outreach efforts.
- It will not require aliens to submit documentation and medical information to support their applications for at least 60 days after they file completed applications and pay their filing fees. This gives aliens time beyond the May 4 deadline to gather support for their applications.

As of March 25, INS' Western Region had received about 60 percent of the applications filed nationwide. Forty-six percent of the nationwide applications (510,755) were from the Los Angeles District. As of February 19, most of the applicants nationwide (about 70 percent) were from Mexico. About 81 percent of

applicants filed directly with INS, while about 19 percent filed with QDEs.

PUBLIC EDUCATION EFFORTS

In our opinion, INS is making a good faith effort to publicize the legalization program. INS contracted with The Justice Group, a consortium of three companies, to advertise the program. From April through October 1987, the advertising was general and informative in nature. No advertising was done in November and December because INS did not want to compete with holiday advertising. A more persuasive advertising effort was started January 15, 1988, and was scheduled to continue through May. It was based on research studies funded by INS so that advertising would be targeted to different ethnic groups in various parts of the country.

INS has also pursued other public education activities. For example, its headquarters and field officials have participated in ethnic days and traveled in mobile offices to remote areas to provide information and process applications.

Under the terms of their agreements with INS, NCAs have responsibility to distribute public information materials prepared by INS. QDEs are to publicize their facilities locally. In their reports to INS, many NCAs outlined public information activities that went beyond this responsibility. For example,

they and their QDE affiliates produced public service announcements for radio and television. They printed brochures and participated in media discussions on legalization. During an April 1988 meeting, NCA members told us INS could have improved its initial efforts through such activities as providing QDEs with more printed material on the legalization program.

Awareness that a legalization program exists appears to be high, at least among undocumented Hispanics. In October and November 1987, Nustats, Inc., did a research study for The Justice Group. Using a combination of sampling techniques, the study found that 92 percent of undocumented Hispanics were aware that a legalization program exists. The results from this study are considered, by Nustats and us, likely to be similar to the views of the U.S. Hispanic illegal alien population.

STUDIES ON REASONS ELIGIBLE

ALIENS HAVE NOT APPLIED

Four studies and the views of NCA officials provided similar reasons why some eligible aliens did not apply for legalization. However, extending the deadline may not overcome them.

The Nustats study said that perceived ineligibility by aliens was the most commonly cited reason for not applying. About half of the 143 Spanish speaking, undocumented aliens who had not applied cited this as a reason. Nustats could not determine whether or

not they were indeed ineligible. Other reasons the Nustats study found that aliens were not applying (in order of their frequency were: (1) they do not have the money, (2) they do not know how to apply, (3) they are afraid of INS, and (4) they fear family separation.

We reviewed three other studies² that surveyed legalization applicants, other community service providers, and QDE directors or immigration lawyers. While each of the three studies had limitations that prevented the results from being projected beyond the people surveyed, their results were similar to Nustats'. All of the studies listed lack of documentation to support their application, fear of INS, and costs as major factors precluding people from applying. Two of the three also listed confusion about the program or law, and fear of family separation as factors.

In their quarterly reports to INS, some NCAs cited similar reasons and added that some aliens lack a sense of urgency and do not believe legalization is necessary. During an April 1988 meeting, NCA members told us that some of INS' rulings on eligibility may have caused aliens not to apply. They pointed out that INS is considering revising some of its initial decisions which could result in aliens now being eligible.

²The studies were done by the Dallas Times Herald, the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials, and the Private Immigration Agency.

INS and some private organizations have taken actions to help address the reasons why some eligible aliens are not applying. For example, INS' Western Region has expanded its education efforts as the application deadline approaches. With respect to concerns that families may be separated because some members do not qualify, INS has said that such cases will be addressed on an individual basis and that no families have been separated. One private organization is providing 10 percent interest loans to aliens for the application costs. However, fewer aliens than expected have taken advantage of them.

INS COSTS AND FEES

As of March 1988, INS had spent about \$150 million and had collected \$176.2 million in fees. While fees have exceeded costs, additional costs will be incurred for those applications that INS has not processed. Such costs include checking the aliens' backgrounds with other agencies (e.g., Federal Bureau of Investigation). INS projects that the total fees that it will receive by the end of the application period (May 4, 1988) will cover all of the program-related costs. Should this not occur, INS will adjust the fees aliens pay when they apply for permanent resident status.

If the program is extended beyond May 4, 1988, the ability of the application fees to cover the costs to continue the program is not known. This is because no reliable data exists to estimate

the number of aliens who may apply during the extension. Depending on the number of applications, the program may require appropriated funds or may result in a surplus of funds.

OPERATIONAL PROBLEMS

When INS began processing applications, several operational problems developed. As INS gained additional experience in processing applications, some of the initial problems related to office procedures and data entry into its information system were overcome. Also, INS staff worked overtime to reduce its case backlog. As of April 2, 1988, INS had reduced the percentage of unprocessed applications to about 25 percent from about 45 percent as of February 18, 1988. However, internal control weaknesses exist in some legalization offices such as: (1) temporary residency cards are not safeguarded and (2) INS has no assurance that fingerprint cards submitted with applications contain the fingerprints of the applying alien. These problems do not threaten the program's viability.

COMPARISON OF U.S. LEGALIZATION PROGRAM

TO OTHER COUNTRIES' PROGRAM

Many key elements of the U.S. legalization program are similar to programs in five other countries³ conducted over the last 15 years. However, some of the requirements under IRCA are stricter than those in the other countries' programs.

The U.S. program requires an alien to have lived here illegally for more than 5 years, and it requires that they pay application fees. In the other countries, an alien needed an average of 9.3 months of residence to qualify. Only one other country (Australia) required aliens to pay an application fee.

The U.S. period for filing applications is at least 6 months longer than the others. Only one country (France) extended its original application deadline. The extension was for two weeks.

This concludes my prepared statement. I would be pleased to answer any questions the subcommittee may have.

³Argentina, Australia, Canada, France, and Venezuela.